

## Message Text

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46

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EUR-25 NEA-10 IO-14 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01

PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 DRC-01 DPW-01 OMB-01 /144 W  
----- 013503

R 181205 JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 932  
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK  
AMCONSUL BIEN HOA  
AMCONSUL CAN THO  
AMCONSUL DANANG  
AMCONSUL NHA TRANG  
USDEL JEC PARIS  
CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L S A I G O N 851

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINT, VS  
SUBJECT: "BIG" MINH'S JAN 16 SPEECH

REF: SAIGON A-03, JANUARY 7, 1974

1. ON JAN 16 GENERAL DUONG VAN (BIG) MINH HELD HIS TRADITIONAL PRE-TET OPEN HOUSE IN SAIGON. THE MEETING HAS BEEN BILLED BY THE PRESS AS A MAJOR GATHERING OF OPPOSITION FIGURES, AND WE BELIEVE THAT INDEED MOST OF THE OPPOSITION ESTABLISHMENT WAS PRESENT. BIG MINH DELIVERED A SPEECH, COPIES OF WHICH IN FRENCH AND ENGLISH ARE CIRCULATING IN SAIGON. FBIS IS TRANSMITTING A TEXT OF GENERAL MINH'S ADDRESS FROM THE SAIGON OPPOSITION DAILY DIEN TIEN.

2. GENERAL MINH'S STATEMENT IS UNUSUALLY INTERESTING FOR SEVERAL REASONS; ITS TIMING TAKES ON SOME SIGNIFICANCE AS WELL, COMING AS IT DOES ALMOST ON THE EVE OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY DEBATE ON THE

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PROPOGD CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS. FOLLOWING POINTS STRIKE US AS NOTEWORTHY:

A) IN SHARP CONTRAST TO THE DEC 18 "PRESS RELEASE"  
CIRCULATED IN PARIS OVER BIG MINH'S NAME (SEE REF), ON JAN 16  
BIG MINH AVOIDED POLEMICS AND DID NOT ONCE USE THE PHRASE "THIRD FORCE".

B) THERE IS MENTION OF INTERNAL DIFFERENCES WITHIN THE OPPOSITION. HE OBSERVED THAT THESE WHO "ADVOCATE CONCILIATION" ARE A "LARGE AND VARIEGATED BLOC AND INEVITABLY DIFFERENCES IN VIEWS EXIST." THEY "CAN STILL" WORK TOGETHER, HOWEVER.

C) BIG MINH STRONGLY ADVISES AGAINST THE FORMATION AT THIS TIME OF ANY MAJOR NEW OPPOSITION ORGANIZATION. "IN MY VIEW, IN THE PRESENT OBJECTIVE AND SUBJECTIVE CONDITIONS IN THE SOUTH, IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO ESTABLISH SUCH AN ORGANIZATION, AND IF IT COULD BE ESTABLISHED, IT CANNOT OPERATE EFFECTIVELY. (IT) COULD FALL INTO A TRAP OF BECOMING AN ORNAMENT OR A DEPENDENCY OF (EITHER) SIDE..."

D) MINH THEN URGES HIS LISTENERS, DIFFICULT AS IT MAY SEEM, TO MAINTAIN "UNITY OF SPIRIT" WHILE NOT UNITING IN A MORE FORMAL WAY. "IN THE PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES, I THINK THERE SHOULD BE NOT HQPGBT SEVERAL RALLYING POINTS, AROUND (DIFFERENT) BODIES OR PERSONALITIES HAVING REALLY STRUGGLED FOR PEACE, WITH A FLEXIBLE COORDINATION..."

E) THE OPPOSITION (WHICH BIG MINH CLAIMS TO REPRESENT) MUST BE CAREFUL, BIG MINH URGES, NOT TO SUPPORT "SYSTEPAITICALLY" EITHER THE COMMUNISTS OR THE PRESENT W # KM "AS PEOPLE ADVOCATING CONCILIATION, WE CANNOT SYSTEMATICALLY OPPOSE ANY SIDE, NOR CAN WE SYSTEMATICALLY SUPPORT ANY SIDE."

3. BIG MINH'S MESSAGE TO HIS FOLLOW OPPOSITIONISTS IS THUS A CLASSIC STATEMENT OF ATTENTISME: LIE LOW, AVOID BEING COMPROMISED BY ASSOCIATION WITH EITHER AIDE, DO NOT PRESENT EITHER SIDE A TARGET, TRY TO MAINTAIN SUFFICIENT UNITY SO THAT WHEN "THE TIME COMES" EFFECTIVE ACTION CAN BE UNDERTAKEN -- BUT THAT TIME IS NOT RPT NOT NOW.

MARTIN

NOTE BY OC/T: GARBLED TEXT AS RECEIVED, WILL BE SERVICED UPON REQUEST

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NNN

\*\*\* Current Handling Restrictions \*\*\* n/a

\*\*\* Current Classification \*\*\* CONFIDENTIAL

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**TAGS:** PINT, VS, (DUONG VAN MINH)  
**To:** STATE INFO BANGKOK  
CINCPAC  
MULTIPLE  
**Type:** TE  
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